The Coalition set several regional goals for 2016, including a planful rollout of supportive and educational programming in targeted areas. After reviewing feedback from regional survivors and stakeholders, we began to strategically plot out what could be done in the short term (springtime), with an eye toward building a stronger network that would allow us to increase our regional offerings in fall 2016.

We began with evening educational seminars to the east and west of Rochester. Our first seminar, held in Geneva, focused on nutrition after breast cancer and breast cancer screening; to the long-term effects of chemotherapy; to managing lymphedema.

Seminars in select cities outside Rochester. The walk is followed by reflective readings, tributes, and music. Family and friends are welcome and encouraged to join us. It is a night to celebrate those who have touched your hearts and souls. Candles and refreshments provided. No registration required.

What Can Regional Breast Cancer Survivors Access Now? -By Tracy Brown

The Coalition offers free educational opportunities, networking events, and supportive programs for breast cancer survivors. Our programs are also open to gynecologic cancer survivors. While most events take place at our Rochester location, some programs can be modified to meet the needs of our regional survivors closer to home.

Evening Educational Seminars are held January through October at 7pm on the fourth Wednesday of the month at the Coalition in Rochester. We also hold Regional Evening Educational Seminars in select cities outside of Monroe County. Topics range from nutrition after breast cancer to treatment protocols. Contact us to be added to our regional mailing list.

Peer Advocates Lending Support (PALS) is a unique mentorship program in which a newly-diagnosed individual is connected to a breast cancer survivor who is a trained peer mentor*, and whose diagnosis, treatment plan, and life situation are similar. PALS mentoring can be provided through one-on-one meetings, over the phone, and by email.

“Become a Regional PALS Mentor! Contact Pat Battaglia, Associate Program Director, at pat@bccr.org to request more information and a volunteer mentor application.

Lives Touched, Lives Celebrated will be held on Wednesday, October 26, 7:00pm - 9:00pm. This annual event begins with a short candlelight walk outside of the Coalition’s facility in Rochester. The walk is followed by reflective readings, tributes, and music. Family and friends are welcome and encouraged to join us. It is a night to celebrate those who have touched your hearts and souls. Candles and refreshments provided. No registration required.

Learn more about these events and opportunities. Contact the Coalition at 585-473-8177 or visit our website at www.BCCR.org/programs/ to learn more about all of our free programs for survivors.

Save the Date! Young Survivor Soirée

November 4th at 6:00pm at our Rochester location.
RSVP required!

Breast Cancer Coalition of Rochester
1048 University Avenue, Rochester, NY 14607
Office: 585-473-8177 • Fax: 585-473-7689 • Online at www.bccr.org

Cover story continued

The support we receive from regional community stakeholders shows us we are on the right track.

“The Coalition has become an excellent resource and support for breast cancer survivors,” says Lisa Franclemont, Health Educator and Program Coordinator for the Genesee and Orleans Counties Cancer Services Program. “The local educational seminars provided by the Coalition for survivors are invaluable and fill a void in our region.” Fall 2016 finds us piloting yet another Gentle Yoga session, this time in Geneseo. Additionally, we’ve increased the number of evening educational seminars throughout the region, with topics ranging from breast density and breast cancer screening; to the long-term effects of chemotherapy; to managing lymphedema.

We’re grateful for the support we’ve received from our regional communities of survivors, supporters, and stakeholders. We look forward to delivering even more regional programming opportunities as we grow our network.

Good advice, indeed! >

Continued inside
When Julie told them about her diagnosis, her process her feelings about her mother’s diagnosis. Her girls were in third and ninth grades at the time and, worried about how they would feel, Julie wanted to make sure Julie had someone by her side if things became overwhelming. Sharon was on hand to write everything down as Julie went through her appointments. A date was set for a mastectomy with reconstruction, and Julie called her mother with the news: Julie had cancer in her right breast.

After Julie Carasone’s maternal aunt was diagnosed with breast cancer in December 2008 following a routine mammogram, she asked her daughter and all of her nieces – including Julie – to schedule their own mammograms to make sure they were healthy and cancer free. Julie’s cousins and sister were told that they were too young for mammography, but at 36 years old, Julie was considered to be “close enough” to 40, and was told to go ahead with the screening. The mammogram revealed that Julie’s right breast was “full of micro-calcifications.” The left breast had hardly any at all. The doctor told Julie she had breast cancer. Her girls were in third and ninth grades at the time and, worried about how they would feel, Julie wanted to make sure Julie had someone by her side if things became overwhelming. Sharon was on hand to write everything down as Julie went through her appointments. A date was set for a mastectomy with reconstruction, and Julie called her mother with the news: Julie had cancer in her right breast.

Julie, always direct and honest, relayed to her doctor, “Well, that just stinks.” Right away, Julie called her daughters’ schools to let their teachers know she would be telling her children that night that she had breast cancer. Her girls were in third and ninth grades at the time and, worried about how they would feel, Julie wanted to inform the administration in case one of them needed to talk to a counselor. That evening, her eldest daughter didn’t take the news well. Somewhat angry, she discovered that her family was true to their faith, and often look to God for guidance. “St. Peregrine is the patron saint of cancer,” she told us. “My sister made me a ‘chemo quilt’ with all of our kids’ favorite things included in the pattern, like a frog and military emblems. On each corner, there was a religious symbol. One had a cross, another had St. Peregrine’s medal.”

Six weeks after her surgery, Julie began chemotherapy. “My faith helped us through,” Julie finished. “I was very lucky,” Julie said. “My dad was taking time off work. My mom was retired, and my brother was a college student.”

If survivors live too far away, they might not have the time to attend programs in Rochester, especially if they are still in the workforce or have family responsibilities. If they are in active treatment, driving to Rochester might not be practical. And traveling poses a financial challenge for many, particularly when medical expenses may be burdensome.

Kate Drake, RYT, leads the Coalition’s Gentle Yoga classes for breast cancer survivors and gynecologic cancer survivors in Dansville. She also led the Gentle Yoga pilot session in Bath. As the Coalition explored the possibility of launching one of its Healing Arts programs regionally, Kate’s name kept surfacing in survivor circles. Other community stakeholders were familiar with her as well. “The Gentle Yoga program has built a common ground for survivors in our rural area. In class they find a place where they can relax and find a comforting bond where they share their experiences openly and without judgment,” Kate told us.

Carole Kistner, a survivor living near Batavia, had this to say about our regional evening educational seminars: “The practitioners brought to our community by the Coalition offer a wealth of knowledge on various topics related to this disease. But even more valuable to me than this added knowledge is the opportunity to engage with other survivors and their families. These women and men of grace renew my hope.”

Cover story continued

Continued on back cover

Thank you to our wonderful community co-sponsors who supported our recent regional evening educational seminars:

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Dormann Library
Finger Lakes Health
Geneva Public Library
Interlakes Oncology and Hematology
Orleans Community Health
Rochester Regional Health
UMMC-Batavia
Senator Patrick M. Gallivan (NYS 59th District)
Senator Michael Nozzolio (NYS 54th District)
Senator Thomas O’Mara (NYS 58th District)
Senator Robert G. Ort (NYS 62nd District)
Senator Michael Ranzenhofer (NYS 61st District)
UR Medicine | Noyes Health
UR Medicine | Wilmot Cancer Institute

Ranzenhofer in Batavia. She's full of energy, and possesses a practical, down-to-earth attitude. She's kindly agreed to share her story with us.

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We find it meaningful when regional survivors affirm the importance of programming in their area.

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